

Assembly approves \$10M WisconsinEye trust fund

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The Assembly today unanimously approved legislation to create a \$10 million trust fund to ensure WisconsinEye remains on the air following a blackout period due to a lack of funding.

The chamber also signed off on a [floor amendment](#) with several tweaks to the legislation, including for the public affairs network to stream public, live broadcasts of its board meetings and maintain free, public access to unedited digital archives of the meetings.

Co-author and Assembly Minority Leader Greta Neubauer, D-Racine, was the only lawmaker to speak ahead of the vote. She said she appreciated the bipartisan work that went into the legislation and thanked Assembly Speaker Robin Vos, R-Rochester, for working with her to find a solution.

“I think that this work reflects how important open government and accountability are to the people that we all serve. I certainly hope that this bipartisanship will continue in the Senate and they will pass this bill so that we can ensure that WisconsinEye has a path to long-term sustainability,” Neubauer said.

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The bill next heads to the Senate, where there still isn't a co-author or a companion version of the legislation. Vos at a pre-session press conference today said he has had “brief discussions” with the Senate, adding he expected that chamber to release its own legislation related to WisconsinEye funding today.

AB 974, which passed 96-0, would put \$10 million into a trust fund for WisconsinEye that would generate interest to fund the public affairs network's operations. WisconsinEye approved an \$897,925 budget for 2026 and has seven staff positions.

The bill doesn't include any up-front funding for the network, though it has been on air since Feb. 2 after lawmakers [approved](#) \$50,000 in state money for operations this month.

The legislation would also require WisconsinEye to add designees of each legislative leader to its board, provide free, continuous access to its live broadcasts and digital archives, submit annual financial reports to the Legislature and focus coverage primarily on official state government meetings and business. Under the bill, designees by legislative leaders could not be state lawmakers.

Along with the public meeting requirement, the amendment clarifies that the state would own all video cameras, audio equipment, connecting cables, and wireless transmission equipment used for WisEye coverage and that if the network ceased operations, remaining funding in the trust would return to the general fund, among other things.

Three WisconsinEye donors have pledged \$175,000 to the network if AB 974 is signed into law. The network has also raised more than \$60,000 through a GoFundMe page launched last month.